/14 cont./

128 they might be of the same race. It is known that not even the fingers of the hand are the same, nor are there two faces alike, nor two perfectly equal characters. Apart from this, this question is very complex: somatic and psychological. A brief stay among them and a superficial knowledge of their language (the liveliest expression of the soul) cannot give more than glimpses and more or less erroneous conclusions. By contrast, a long stay with them of ten years, intimate, familiar, and colloquial, I believe gives me a certain authority to touch upon the subject.

• 152 32. Breaking down, in order to clarify and define well, we encounter, on the first level, a somatic, or, more specifically, a facial, gaiety.

114 In this sense the lack of vivacity can be noted in the ex-
152 pression of all of their passions, those of love as well as those of hate, in the Indians. I am in agreement with Humboldt in that the semi-immobility of the features is a characteristic feature of native tribes; and I am greatly surprised /15/ by Simpson's statement about the habitual smile and even more by the loud guffaws and that they are always good natured.
[142] Quite the contrary, Indians, by their physiognomy, look like silhouettes cut out with scissors or bronze statues in the temple of fatalism; with their eyes half open and downcast, "as though drowsy with lassitude," the nose flat, the forehead low, and the lips thick and coarse, they have (as Humboldt says) "rather more a tribal or group physiognomy than the personal physiognomy of a given individual."

33. But the German explorer warns us that we must not take for melancholy the indolence and dullness or lack of vivacity. We must further bear in mind that every race has its standard of expression and of beauty, which might not be exactly the Hellenic or Caucasian ones. And thus, as the proverb says that "under a humble cloak there hides a good drinker," so also behind an amorphous face that might perhaps

/15 cont./

114 seem blank to us, the Indians generally hide a happy heart
152 overflowing with good humor. This is real, or psychological, happiness.

152 Freedom from difficulty in material life, the absence of psychological preoccupations, good social relations, an assiduous contemplation of nature, a scarcity of ambitions, etc., cannot do less than produce a certain intimate complacency, if it does not reach euphoria and felicity.

Naturally this is not a very exhilarating joy, but it is a truer one than the "laughter of dry or baked earth," which is told us of the Tuarez tribe or the "laughter of thorns in the fire," of which the Holy Books speak to us.

522 34. The joke, an example of cleverness and an arm
195 against ennui and tediousness, is not rare in the language of the Indians. Let us look, only by way of an example and not as a cataloge, at some of these:

E puek av-ichí? -- Ue-yepué puek edai?

What are you doing? What are you in? -- I am in my bones.

E puek av-echiri-puetí? -- Yuré neké; u-motá ponkón sekanon-cán puek man.

Why are you shouting? -- Not I, it is the inhabitants of my shoulder (hill) who are vexed (e.g., when carrying sticks).

On being asked to assent to a controversial matter, instead of answering iná, iná, "yes, yes," or iná-pe-ré, "it seems so," they respond with nearly homonymous phrases, but with an absolutely different meaning, ay-euná, y-euná, piok dapón, "your nose, full of pimples," or euná piré, "your reddish nose."

To say that they are very hungry frequently /16/ they are heard to say: u-paná kuntá karé euayichik, "I am with a belly up to my ear lobes."

On river trips, during which tediousness can be extreme, they can often be heard seeking relief now shouting at a black bird, "this isn't black territory," now at a tijereta, "that one stole some scissors for a tail," now shouting at a macaw, "that

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/25 cont./
that more cases do not occur, since outside of the /26/ mission territories, almost the only remedy which the Indians have is to have recourse to Catalonian justice, that is to say, justice by their own hand.

54. Having thus untangled the question asked us about the peacefulness or fierceness of the Indians, we can come to some general conclusions:

1) The Indians are timid, suspicious, and even retiring.
2) Sometimes they are or become fierce and even make reprisals.

Chapter VII

Are the Indians Temperate or Gluttonous?

55. Temperate through necessity, gluttonous if they have the chance. 56. The great blot on the Indian's character. 57. Attenuating circumstances for this defect. 58. Intemperance in drinking. 59. From the belly it comes forth.... 60. Falsely religious inebriation. 61. Government measures against alcohol. 62. Pagan idea of drunkenness. 63. A digression about the ancient Indians of Caracas.

55. The question that somebody asks us is framed in the following terms: "Is it true, as some say, that the Indians are a piece of stomach, an animal that simply feeds itself and procreates, or are they, on the contrary, as others say, temperate and abstinent as ascetics?"

I love the Indians but I must love the truth more. And the truth in this case obliges me to say that, in general, the Indian is sober and temperate through necessity, but, given the occasion, he easily falls into intemperance and gluttony.

/76 cont./

584 their daughters (and the more so when they find themselves
581 older and less able to work) that they not marry an Indian who is too young, or an Indian who does not know how to weave baskets, sebucanes, guayares, etc..., or Indians of short stature; that on the contrary they prefer one who is already mature, an early riser, one who wets his knees with the saliva of the stars (dew), one who stains his arms with mud and with earthworms' feces or the flesh caught by his fishhook, one who has undergone the incisions or "caouek" and the "eseunakipa" or indigestion /sic -- "ingestion"/ through the nasal passage of magic remedies so that he may be a clever hunter and fisher, etc.

● 152 Possibly the Indians are of a less violent nature than we; and there is no doubt but that they are more long-suffering and patient, they hide their feelings better, and thus they manage to have a more placid life.

576 167. Rules of etiquette. The Indians follow their rules in greetings and farewells, in their modest banquets for guests and strangers, and in discussions themselves.

576 For those who like to blame and scorn the natives, I can
593 transcribe a small detail of their daily life: The Indian asks for water from his wife, and she, if there is any, will bring him kachirí after having tried it herself. When I asked them why they did that and why they asked for it in that way, they told me that they always asked for water in case there should be no kachirí, so that the woman would not be embarrassed. And she always /77/ tries everything before serving it as a sign of union and mutual confidence.

[609] Without an order from her husband a woman will never present food or drink to any strange man.

[264] On the arrival of strangers, the women will eat apart and after the men.

512 Let it also be noted that, once the "atapontén seré" has been said, it is time to lie down; the serious and formal Indians (and I say it because there is no lack of more or less headstrong

539 Another peculiar omission is that in almost all other versions of the extraordinarily widespread magic bench story, this bench is provided with spines, bits of jagged rock, wasp stings, or the like (the "Stachelsitz" motive) which inflict physical pain on the user, here the Buzzard King. In the Kamarakoto version the injury is emotional, not physical: he is frightened. This is clearly [152] related to the Kamarakoto "fear of fear," mentioned elsewhere. To them the infliction of fright is at least as serious as the infliction of pain.

[177] The final episode combines a catastrophe with creation. The Kamarakotos also have legends of catastrophes by water, but these obviously contain recent intrusions or are garbled versions of legends passed on from Indians who have been in contact with missionaries, so that I believed it impossible to be 539 sure of any truly native elements and did not record them. This catastrophe 823 story by earthquake leading to petrification is unusual, although the element in it of belief that local rocks and hills are petrified people and animals is widespread — compare Koch-Grünberg's Taurepán "Taten des Makunaima," which gives such origins for rocks and cliffs near Roroimá.

The petrified progenitor of the Kamarakotos, who is strangely called by that name although it can only properly mean a tribe and not a person, still exists in Kamarata and we visited and photographed him (see Fig. 80).[1] He consists of a rounded outcrop of rock with a smaller, pear-shaped, weathered boulder on top. There is no real resemblance to a human figure or face. There are no drawings or carvings on the rock, no offerings, no evidence at all of a cult or other human activities, and the Indians who accompanied us showed neither awe nor respect for the rock, although solemnly agreeing that it is, indeed, the ancestor of the tribe. Questions as to origin and the name of the tribe were usually answered by reference to this legend.

539 The other motif in the final episode, that of animal origin from human 825 beings, is one of the most common elements in Indian folklore, and indeed in folklore generally. It is almost as elemental in primitive mythology as the motif, exemplified in almost every episode of this whole story, of animals that talk and act like humans. The likewise common inverse transformation, from animal to human, is seen in the episode of the Queen Buzzard. Mythology in general and that of the Kamarakotos in particular assume no basic distinction [171] between animals and man. Many Carib tribes, and I think also the Kamarakotos [551] although unable to establish the point beyond question, commonly apply animal names to people. The other frequent concomitants of such animal myths, such as animal totems and taboos, seem, however, to be entirely absent among the Kamarakotos.

539 As a final comment, the unusual role played by Piaimá in this story should 776 be noted. In other myths and in Carib thought in general, Piaimá is represented as an untrustworthy, bloody, and generally inimical being. Here he appears as a benevolent teacher. A connecting link between these anomalously contrasting

[1] [see p 262B, category 116 - Analysis]

539 776 roles can, however, be seen in the fact that Piaimā is commonly represented as a familiar of the piaches, although hopelessly dangerous to other Indians, and even as teaching the piaches their peculiar arts and spells.

Character and Habits

157 Much of Kamarakoto character is evident from what has already been said, for character is inherent not only in the social culture of a people but also in what they make and use, in what they eat and drink, and in how they talk. Of course Kamarakotos show marked differences in personal character, but it is quite possible to speak also of a tribal norm in this respect. Indeed it was our impression that they are more uniform in character than are most civilized communities, and this is natural because of the almost complete uniformity in their lives, lack of division of labor or differentiation of habits as between different household groups, frequent social contacts with each other, and fairly uniform genetic heritage.

157 171 [197] [264] The Kamarakotos are Caribs and the Caribs have a bad name historically. Many of them were cannibals and they have even given us our word "cannibal."[223] Many Caribs were quarrelsome and warlike, a scourge to their neighbors and a terror to the white invaders. Some of them, notably the Motilones, have not been conquered to this day and still exact a heavy toll of life from those who attempt to travel in their fastnesses. Such a picture is, however, completely 157 and ridiculously false as applied to the Kamarakotos. Their most obvious character traits, as we saw them, are mildness and gaiety. They are happy, affectionate people who seldom quarrel and seldom show the slightest sign of anger or of opposition.

Humor.

157 ● 152 Kamarakotos are anything but dour and silent — they do not belong to what some popular writers in North America call the "ugh" school of Indians. On the contrary, they chatter endlessly and their facile emotions are usually obvious. The common facial expression is a broad smile, and any amusing 157 incident gives rise to gales of loud laughter. They have a keen sense of humor 522 and are constantly joking. Puns are in high favor (I have noted some on previous pages). A few other incidents exemplify the sort of things that the Kamarakotos think are funny (and we shared this opinion). The fact that a flock of chickens included only roosters gave rise to obvious comments, gaily received. When I had been measuring their heads and we were about to set off to visit "Kamarakoto," the enormous stone that is believed to be their petrified ancestor, I was told to be sure to bring my calipers (span about 30 centimeters)

223 [see footnote on pp. 332-33, category 116 — Analyst]

[text continues on p. 263]

157 522 became this would be a head measurement that was really worth-while. A young unmarried man taking a length of cloth for a woman's dress as part of his pay was surrounded by a crowd making robustly insulting remarks accompanied [824] by loud guffaws in which he sheepishly joined. Even a happy surprise that is [381] not essentially humorous, such as unexpectedly encountering a tree full of ripe [302] "caruto" fruits (used for face paint), is an occasion for long laughter.

There are two noteworthy differences from supposedly more civilized humor, and these are decidedly in the Kamarakoto's favor: we saw no case in which a physical injury or indignity was considered funny, and crude practical jokes and the startling or frightening of anyone were expressly avoided and considered quite the opposite of humorous.

Emotional Adjustment.

171 158 In northern Venezuela we observed that most members of the peon class are definitely neurotic.[224] Most of them live oppressed by anxiety, ridden by fear of almost everything around them, and in a state of worry with few and 158 brief remissions. The opposite is true of the Kamarakotos. No neurotic individ- [157] uals or states were observed among them. Anxiety and worry seemed almost unknown, and the whole tribe exhibited a degree of emotional adjustment that 155 could not be matched in any "civilized" community of equal size. It will not be a popular statement, but scientific conscience compels me to add that the almost complete absence of a formulated religion is certainly one element in this remarkably good adjustment, just as the burden of such a religion plays a definite and large role in the neurotic anxiety of the northern peones.[225] Another element, probably the most important, is the security and care enjoyed by the children, as noted below.

● 152 It is not true that fear is unknown and it is apparently, but not really, contradictory that the Kamarakotos are almost free of anxiety but are often [828] afraid and have even been known to die of fear. They do not seriously fear physical injury: what they fear is fear itself. They detest being startled and often show marked consideration in avoiding giving anyone a start or surprise. Playing peek-a-boo with a baby, so common with us, was never seen and might [754] indeed be considered a serious injury. They fear the kanaima, but in their stories of danger from kanaima the injury is seldom represented as inflicted by physical means but by a noise, or similar thing, that merely startles and frightens [839] the victim. I have noted the curious and revealing fact that in their version of the widespread "stachelsitz" (spiny bench) legend, the bench is not spiny at all and the damage is inflicted by fright and not, as in almost all other known versions of this story, by physical pain.

224, 225 [see footnotes on p. 333, category 116 - Analyst]

Indifference to Suffering.

157 154 Indifference to suffering is popularly considered to be a universal Indian trait and is usually roundly condemned on moral and social grounds. The Kamarakotos show this (to us) rather unpleasing characteristic in considerable degree, but its basis is evident and it cannot be severely condemned if it is well understood. It seems anomalous that a tribe should be notably kind, mild, affectionate, and anxious not to inflict pain, and at the same time apparently apathetic toward the suffering of others, but the two traits are not really incompatible and are, indeed, largely different aspects of the same characteristic. They hate pain and, being sympathetic, dislike inflicting it. But sympathy means in fact (as the word does in origin) the sharing of feeling. To be sympathetic with a person in pain means in some measure to share the pain. The Kamarakotos tend to withdraw from pain, a perfectly normal psychological reaction, and the very fact that they are sympathetic makes them tend strongly to withdraw from a person in pain simply because it is painful for them not to withdraw. This, too, is a normal reaction, whether conscious or subconscious, and it is shared by most persons in our society. But in our society most of us carefully hide this reaction, partly in hypocrisy, because it is contrary to our social mores, and partly from the better motive of hoping to alleviate the pain of the sufferer. It is not contrary to Kamarakoto mores, more natural or, if you like, more primitive than ours, and according to their beliefs and knowledge, there is no good reason for attending to suffering because the ordinary person can do nothing to alleviate pain. If the pain is natural, nothing is possible but waiting for death or recovery. If it is supernatural, only a skilled piache can hope to remedy it. In either case withdrawal from the suffering person is not only perfectly proper but also the only sensible course, granting the Kamarakoto premises.

157 154 758 Despite this tendency toward withdrawal, the Kamarakotos certainly feel real sorrow for the suffering of anyone near to them and, within their own system, real consideration. The latter is well shown by the fact that when a person is ill they make every effort to do what little they believe can be done, notably to get a piache (or during our stay to persuade our doctor) to attend the victim. They do not sit by the bedside (hammock-side), prepare special food, soothe the fevered brow, and the like, because they see no benefit in these things, and they endeavor to continue their normal activities and to put the sufferer out of their minds as much as possible.

Children.

152 593 There is much and obvious personal affection and family pride. Kissing is unknown and casual embracing rare, but between husband and wife, or wives,

●157 parents and children, and friends there are evident expressions of pleasure and
[573] consideration, exchanges of gifts, and efforts to please. Children play together
857 in greatest amity (Figs. 81, 82,[2]) and it is common to see boy chums who are al-
most always together and often stand arm in arm.

857 Children in general lead unusually happy and secure lives. Although not
855 given tasks beyond their strength, they are not treated as something apart from
adult life but are integral members of society like everyone else and share in
all activities on an equal basis. They are well treated and deferred to as much
[861] as one adult would defer to another. They seldom need disciplining, because
they act much like their elders beyond a greater playfulness, which is quite
innocent, and no adult activities are categorically forbidden them. We never
saw a child disciplined and saw few cases of their needing it, in our opinion.
854 The small babies cry infrequently because they usually get what they want with-
out crying. Several times when a baby cried for something that an older child
had, the older child gave it, even if a little reluctantly.

Until they can walk, children almost never leave their mothers. They
are carried everywhere in the baby-sling, to such an extent that a sling with a
[853] baby in it seems part of an adult woman's costume (Fig. 83).[2] The baby never
feels insecure, because he is always with his mother, and he is never hungry,
because her breast is always there for him to help himself. He is an honored and
155 protected member of society from his first breath. There can be little doubt
854 that much of the placidity and amiability of the people has its origin in the
baby-sling. Most civilized mothers could learn a great deal about the psycholog-
ical, if not the physical, care of infants from the Kamarakotos. Their system
does not, as some theorists would suppose, produce what we would call "spoiled"
children, but produces happy and reasonable ones.

847 Some Carib tribes have practiced extensive infanticide and perhaps some
[17] still do. Of course the Kamarakotos deny this in their case, and it is so con-
trary to their characters that they are doubtless truthful in this denial. They
842 seem greatly to desire children. Orphans are adopted, usually but not always
[597] by a paternal uncle, as a matter of course and are in every respect treated like
their own children by the foster parents. No woman said or seemed to feel that
she had too many, or even enough, children.

Modesty.

834 The Kamarakotos are extremely modest, but only on one point. Adults
[514] do not expose the pubic region, even before members of the same sex. Men
and women show no particular reticence in performing physiological functions
in plain sight of persons of either sex, but manage to do so in such a way that
[291] the pubic region is not in view. Very small boys are not embarrassed at being
quite naked, but as soon as the loincloth is put on they begin to show modesty.

2 [see pp. 265a and 265b, category 116 - Analyst]
2 [see p. 280a, category 116 - Analyst]
[text continues on p 266]

Swimming.

526 The men and, particularly, the boys are very fond of swimming and [481] spend hours in the water. They paddle and splash around hilariously. It is pe- [147] culiar that when seriously attempting to go anywhere in the water, they swim below the surface, staying under as long as a minute and crossing any of the streams in Kamarata (up to perhaps twenty meters) without coming up for breath. The stroke is a rather formless but effective paddle. They tread water and remain at the surface in deep pools with ease, but I never saw them progress on the surface for more than one or two strokes. This is pure conjecture and not entirely probable, but it almost seems that they have learned swimming by imitating fishes and that it has not occurred to them that they might swim and breathe air at the same time.

Drunkenness.

273 Their herculean drinking bouts have been mentioned in connection with the dances that usually accompany them. Their alcoholic drinks are weak enough to require considerable perseverance in order to become drunken, but at these long parties most adults, men and women, do eventually achieve this [514] condition. Such a party becomes disgusting, from any sober point of view, particularly as vomiting is an expected interlude between rounds, but at the one [578] bout that I attended it did not become seriously disorderly. It is the highest tribute to Kamarakoto character that even with the whole crowd irresponsibly alcoholic, there was no quarreling, no abusive or even particularly noisy language, and that as much courtesy and thoughtfulness persisted as was at all consistent with their condition. Children of all sizes attended and were not neg- [857] lected but had an equally hilarious time without drinking.[228]

● [152] Such excesses have their aftermath and the only time that I saw the Kamarakotos surly and cheerless was the day after a week of carousing, when all were suffering severely and had lost interest in life or the neighbors.

Incendiarism.

157 A curious practice not mentioned in previous pages is that of setting fires 372 in the dry season. The dry grass of the sabanas then becomes highly inflamma- 311 ble and the Indians delight in firing it, just to see it burn. Some tribes do this, ostensibly at least, to drive out animals when hunting or as a means of signaling,[229] but the Kamarakotos have, and give, no other reason than they enjoy 372 setting and watching the fires. Flying over the country in this season, rings of 311 fire can often be seen on every patch of sabana and after a party from the Caroni left us we could see columns of smoke in that direction for two days. The forest

228, 229 [see footnotes on p. 333, category 116 – Analyst]